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Jordanian militants train in Afghanistan to confront regime Agence Fran

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HEADLINE: Jordanian militants train in Afghanistan to confront regime

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AMMAN, May 30 (AFP) - Moslem militants trained in guerrilla warfare in Afghanistan are preparing to set Jordan ablaze if it signs a peace treaty with Israel and to promote fundamentalism, some of them have said.

A government official told AFP the militants were among a 300-strong force of Jordanians who recently returned to the country from Afghanistan, sparking fears among the authorities for stability in the kingdom.

In separate interviews with AFP three of these militants, who only gave their first names because of what they said were "fears of reprisals," said their mission was to promote holy war in Jordan and seek followers.

"We are ready for any confrontation with the regime because of our beliefs," said 27-year-old militant Zaki. He underwent four training sessions in Jalalabad, eastern Afghanistan, at the Moslem Brotherhood's Salah Eddin camp.

"If Jordan signs a peace treaty with Israel we will put the kingdom to fire and sword," warned Rifaat, 29.

He was trained by Al-Ka'ida, a secret organisation in Afghanistan that is financed by a wealthy Saudi businessman who owns a construction firm in Jeddah, Ossama ibn Laden.

"Members of Al-Ka'ida pledge total allegiance to the group and undergo military training more sophisticated than anywhere else in Afghanistan and tailored to their countries of origin," Rifaat said.

They learn to impose "by force if necessary sharia (Islamic law)."

"Some privileged members are also trained to launch anti-air Stinger missiles," Rifaat added.

The third militant, Tawfiq, said he was a member of Afghan Prime Minister -designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami movement.

"We will intervene in Jordan when the time is ripe, as it is currently in Egypt," he said in reference to a year-old campaign by Moslem fundamentalists to overthrow the secular government of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

In July 1991, Jordanian authorities dismantled a network of Moslem fundamentalists whose members had also been trained in Afghanistan.

Six leaders of The Army of Mohammad were accused of terrorist attacks in Jordan and sentenced to death. The sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment and in October they were released from jail under a general amnesty.

Zaki, Rifaat and Tawfiq, said that on their return from Afghanistan they had been interrogated daily for two weeks by Jordanian intelligence officers.

"The policemen told me 'We're aware of what you were doing in Afghanistan and we want to know if you and your friends plan on meddling in internal affairs and set up an organisation in Jordan,'" Zaki said.

A Jordanian government official confirmed that the militants were being interrogated by the security services.

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"The law authorises interrogations and the arrest of any Jordanian who took part in the creation of armed groups without obtaining prior permission from the authorities," the official said.

"Only one Jordanian from Afghanistan is currently in jail," he said, adding that the detention of suspects is usually brief.

Zaki, Rifaat and Tawfiq said they maintained "regular contact" with Afghan veterans in Jordan to exchange information, views and read fundamentalist pamphlets published in Afghanistan.

One publication, Sada al-Jihad (Echo of Holy War), called for donations to be sent to a numbered bank account in Peshawar.

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